

December 2013

IN THIS EDITION



Light Up Main, parade set for Dec. 6, 7. See page 3.



Broadway Voices kicks off with Dec. 14 show. See page 3.

TOWN HALL CALENDAR

Dec. 17: Town Council meeting (7 p.m.)

Dec. 24-26: CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS (TOWN OFFICES CLOSED)

Jan. 1: NEW YEAR'S DAY (TOWN OFFICES CLOSED)

Meetings are in the Council Chambers in Building B at Town Hall, 900 Seventh Ave. Town Council meetings are recorded and broadcast (not live) on GTV11 (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).



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GARNER UPDATE

Vol. 60, No. 66



Garner's excellent quality of life and comparatively low cost of living earned it a ranking as one of the best places to live in North Carolina.

Garner Named One of Five Best Cities or Towns in NC

Just a few months after being named an All-America City, Garner has earned another enviable accolade. Movoto, a San Mateo, Calif.-based real-estate brokerage frequently cited by major news organizations, has named Garner the fifth-best city or town in North Carolina.

According to the company's data crunching, Garner ranked as one of the top five based on cost of living, crime rate, education, median household income, home values and amenities.

"After garnering the information about this town just outside of Raleigh, we realized just how big of a difference a lower cost of living can make—in choosing a place to live and in making our list," said a Nov. 21 blog post on Movoto.com announcing the rankings. "Garner's cost of living is 5 percent lower than North Carolina's average, making it the least

expensive spot on our Top 10."

Movoto also noted that Garner residents have a median household income that is 37 percent higher than the state median.

The full report on the rankings is available at movoto.com/blog/top-ten/the-10-best-cities-in-north-carolina.

In a statement released to Movoto, Mayor Ronnie Williams touted Garner's multitude of strengths. "It's no surprise that Garner has won this latest accolade, which comes on the heels of being named an All-America City. With our great parks and cultural arts scene, and our nationally recognized schools, Garner is truly a great place to live and raise a family."

The other towns in Movoto's top five for North Carolina were Apex, Wake Forest, Matthews and Morrisville.



Stay informed by watching the weekly 'Garner Update' newscast on demand at garnernc.gov.



A Message from the Mayor



Watch the mayor's 'Great People in Garner' on GTV11 (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).

Well, it seems fitting that, as the year starts drawing to a close, Garner should get more outside validation for all that we have accomplished as a community.



As you may have heard, a national real-estate brokerage based in California has ranked Garner as the fifth-best city or town in North Carolina (see the article on page one). Of course, my

first reaction was, what, only fifth best? But, I'm grateful for the recognition, even if they didn't quite get the exact order of ranking right.

It's been a spectacular year for Garner. In March, our citizens gave the Town the go-ahead to move forward with a \$35.7 million bond program that will result in a new indoor recreation center, a new Town Hall and police station and an array of street improvements and additions to our network of sidewalks and greenways, among other things. In the spring, we were named a

finalist for All-America City. Then in June, we took a delegation out to Denver and came back home one of 10 All-America Cities for 2013. Later in the summer, we celebrated the opening of the WakeMed healthplex.

Yes, it's been some year. Happy holidays to you and yours, and may 2014 bring you much joy and prosperity.

Ronnie S. Williams

Ronnie S. Williams

Garner 101 Graduates First-Ever Class

The Town of Garner honored its first-ever Garner 101 graduating class at a dinner and ceremony on Nov. 6.

Twenty-two citizens earned their Garner 101 diplomas after attending a series of 10 weekly classes on all of the different facets of Town government. The classes also exposed students to partner organizations, such as Garner Volunteer Fire-Rescue, Inc., and the Garner Chamber of Commerce, that provide services

to the Town and its citizens. Classes also included field trips to places such as the county's water treatment plant on N.C. 50.

Participants were unanimous in their praise for the course and for the staff and community partners who made presentations at classes. Neighborhood Improvement Manager Reginald Buie, who oversees Garner 101, was singled out for special praise. Buie looked to Raleigh and other communities around the

state for ideas on how to structure Garner 101.

Buie and Town staff hope Garner 101 graduates will return to their communities, share what they have learned and emerge as community leaders.

To learn more about the program, and to find out about enrolling in the Garner 101 course next year, please contact Mr. Buie at rbuie@garnernc.gov or (919) 773-4446.

Kids in Parks Program Comes to Garner

The Kids in Parks program, an initiative of the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Blue Ridge Parkway and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, has chosen Lake Benson Park's Woodland Trail (trail head near parking lot by shelter #1) to be one of its TRACK Trails. Look for the brochures at the trail head, which are chock-full of information and suggestions for self-guided adventures. For more information, visit kidsinparks.com.





Light Up Main, Parade Coming Dec. 6, 7

Downtown Garner's annual holiday traditions – Light Up Main and the Christmas Parade – will bring plenty of cheer on Friday, Dec. 6 and Saturday, Dec. 7.

Light Up Main, featuring the lighting of the tree by Mayor Ronnie Williams and Santa and Mrs. Claus, will be 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6. The tree will be lighted at 6:15 p.m.

The parade will be held the following afternoon starting at 2 p.m. This year's parade theme—"All-America Christmas"—celebrates Garner's selection as a 2013 All-America City by the National Civic League. Garner's All-America City delegation will serve as grand marshals of the parade.

Light Up Main is a family-friendly event that includes visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus and children's arts and crafts activities along a closed-off Main Street. Local entertainment includes Wake Baptist Grove



Santa will be in downtown Garner on Dec. 6 and 7. Come on out and see the jolly old elf.

Church, Christy's Dance Xplosion, the G-Squad and others. The event is sponsored by the Town of Garner, the Garner Revitalization Association and downtown businesses. Parking is available along Pearl Street, Main Street and at the GBI baseball complex at 417 W. Main St.

Saturday's parade begins at the corner of Garner Road and Avery Street and proceeds to Benson Road and makes a left. It will then make

a left onto and proceed down Main Street. The procession next will turn left onto New Rand Road, then left onto Garner Road and end at the intersection of Garner Road and Avery Street.

Public parking for the parade will be available at the Garner Senior Center (205 E. Garner Road); Garner Recreational Park (221 E. Garner Road); the GBI baseball complex (417 W. Main St.); North Garner Middle School's rear lot (accessible via Curtiss Drive) and on streets adjacent to the parade route except for Broughton, Powell and Avery streets.

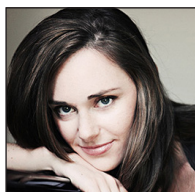
Visitors to the events should also check out the Main Street Market at 102 E. Main St. The market, a collection of local vendors offering handmade and unique products ideal for holiday entertaining and gift giving, will be open Friday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 4 p.m.

UPCOMING GPAC EVENTS



Broadway Voices Season Kicks Off with Dec. 14 Performance

The first Broadway Voices show of the new season is Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Garner Performing Arts Center (742 W. Garner Road). Dublin-born Ciarán Sheehan, an acclaimed actor and singer, will take the stage that evening. He has many professional accomplishments to his credit, most notably playing the role of The Phantom in "The Phantom of The Opera" for over 1,000 performances on Broadway and in Toronto. To learn more and order tickets, visit garnerperformingartscenter.com.



'Wonder: The Sounds and Stories of Christmas' on Dec. 15

Instrumental pop pianist Dawn Michelle Williams and her band take the GPAC stage on Dec. 15 at 3 p.m. with former WRAL morning show radio personality Bill Jordan. Williams will add spark to treasured Christmas melodies. This year's performance weaves cherished Christmas stories with the music of the season. Jordan's narration and Williams' music combine to create a new Christmas tradition. For tickets, visit garnerperformingartscenter.com.



Lunch with Santa and the Big Bang Boom Band on Dec. 21

Join in the excitement as The Big Bang Boom Band brings its unique twist on holiday classics to GPAC on Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. Have your wish list ready for a special appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus. A box lunch is provided with admission. For tickets, visit garnerperformingartscenter.com.



You can follow GPAC on Twitter (@GPACGarner) and Facebook.



Officer Honored for Crisis Intervention Work

Garner police Officer Steven Doak was recognized Oct. 31 for being the Garner Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Officer of the Year and one of Wake County's CIT Officers of the Year.



Officer Doak earned these honors for his role in a critical incident

involving a mentally ill person. He has answered numerous CIT calls throughout his career and helped

many citizens in crisis in Garner.

The CIT is a partnership among law enforcement, mental health care providers and mental health advocates that trains police officers to provide services to the mentally ill who are in crisis.

The CIT model began in Memphis, Tenn., and has spread across the country. It involves 40 hours of specialized training that covers topics such as medicines, diagnoses, de-escalation skills, role plays, site visits and observation of the crisis center.

Over the years, the CIT has helped many mentally ill individuals get the treatment and services they need instead of being arrested for minor crimes.

"The Garner Police Department is proud to be a part of the CIT partnership with mental health advocates," Chief Brandon Zuidema said. "Each patrol team and division within our agency has CIT officers who respond to those in mental health crisis 24 hours a day."

Officer Doak joined GPD in 2005.

PRCR Wins State Award for Halloween Event

Garner's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department last month won an Innovative Program Award from the North Carolina Recreation and Park Association.

The department earned the honor for the inaugural Trick-or-Treat the Trails event at White Deer Park in 2012. Over 4,500 people attended the event. Attendees had the chance to enjoy a great recreation program offered at virtually no cost to the Town. Participants were able to exercise and were exposed to trails that many had not ever visited.

The 40-plus local businesses and organizations that gave out treats along the trails were able to advertise and share information with thousands of people in just three hours.

The inaugural event also won the Rising Star Award from the N.C. Association of Festivals and Events earlier this year. The second annual Trick-or-Treat the Trails this year drew approximately 6,000 people, with 43 local organizations and businesses participating.



Follow Garner Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources on Twitter (@GarnerPRCR) and Facebook.

GPD Crime Analyst Receives Elite Certification from IACA

The Town Council at its Nov. 19 meeting recognized Garner Police Department crime analyst Lauren Norman for becoming a certified law enforcement analyst through the International Association of Crime Analysts (IACA).

Norman is one of only 46 analysts in the world to be certified through the association. She was certified in September after completing all of the necessary



requirements to apply and sit for the exam, which she passed.

Norman joined the Garner Police Department in March 2012 and has implemented and managed the department's data-driven approaches to crime and traffic safety (DDACTS), among other duties.

Garner PIO Pockets Pair of Awards

Garner's public information officer, Rick Mercier, won two Excellence in Communications Awards from the North Carolina Association of Government Information Officers at its annual seminar on Nov. 14.

Mercier won a first-place award for Garner's social media campaign for the All-America City Award and video competition. Garner won the

All-America City Award in June, and its video contest entry won in the category of most views.

Mercier also won honorable mention in the category of print publications for the Guide to Garner, which was mailed to all Town households this summer and is available at Town Hall and other Town facilities. Mercier wrote, edited and designed the guide.